

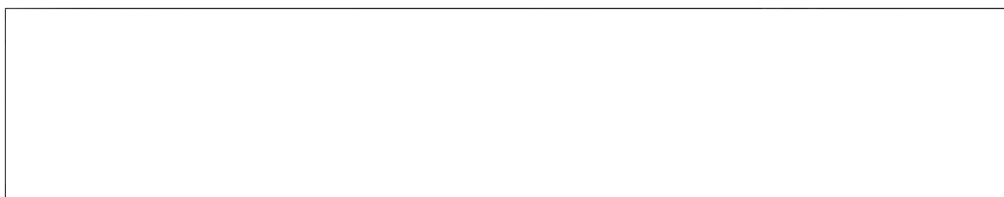
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RUEHDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 3552
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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, ECON, PBTS, IS, JO, LE, XF
SUBJECT: CODEL MOYNIHAN'S VISIT TO ISRAEL

MEETING WITH SHIMON PERES

12) MOST OF SENATOR MOYNIHAN'S JANUARY 19 MEETING WITH OPPOSITION LABOR PARTY CHAIRMAN SHIMON PERES WAS TAKEN UP WITH DISCUSSION OF THE LABOR PARTY'S POSITION ON LEBANON. THE SENATOR NOTED THAT THERE WAS GROWING OPPOSITION IN THE UNITED STATES TO THE PRESENCE OF THE U.S. MARINES IN LEBANON. THE SENATOR SAID THE JORDANIANS HAD JUST TOLD HIM THEY BELIEVED THE ODDS FAVORED A SYRIAN VICTORY AND THEN DAMASCUS WOULD FOCUS ITS ATTENTION ON AMMAN. PERES RESPONDED BY NOTING THAT ISRAEL SHOULD NOT BASE ITS POLICY ON AN EXPECTATION THAT SYRIA WILL WITHDRAW FROM LEBANON THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS. SINCE WAR IS NOT AN OPTION NOR WILL THE RUSSIANS LIKELY WITHDRAW FROM SYRIA, THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE IS "A POLICY OF CONTAINMENT."

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PAGE 002
TOR: 231916Z JAN 84

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PERES INDICATED THAT ISRAEL, TOGETHER WITH THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE, SHOULD RETURN TO A POLICY OF "RED LINES," I.E., A STRONG WARNING TO THE SYRIANS THAT THEY CANNOT CROSS SPECIFIED LINES IN LEBANON WITHOUT SUFFERING CONSEQUENCES. IN THIS CONTEXT, SYRIA MUST BE TOLD THAT ISRAEL RETAINS THE RIGHT OF OVERFLIGHT OF LEBANON FOR RECONNAISSANCE PURPOSES. SYRIA MUST ALSO BE WARNED THAT EVERY ACT OF TERROR THAT EMANATES FROM TERRITORY CONTROLLED BY SYRIA WILL RESULT IN SYRIA BEING HELD RESPONSIBLE BY ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES. THEN THE LEBANESE SHOULD BE PRESSURED TO STRENGTHEN THEIR OWN GOVERNMENT. POSTPONEMENT IS "TERRIBLY DANGEROUS" SINCE THE SHIITES ARE BECOMING MORE DANGEROUS AND STRONGER, SUBJECT TO THE "WINDS FROM IRAN." IT IS WRONG AND FOOLISH, PERES SAID, FOR ISRAEL TO BE THE POLICEMAN OF LEBANON. ISRAEL SHOULD SEEK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO IMPLEMENT THE SECURITY PROVISIONS OF THE MAY 17 AGREEMENT AND THEN EVACUATE THE COUNTRY IN COORDINATION WITH THE UNITED STATES. THUS, ISRAEL AND U.S. POLICY SHOULD BE BASED ON CONTAINMENT OF THE SYRIANS, FORMATION OF A COALITION GOVERNMENT IN LEBANON, AND SECURITY GUARANTEES. PERES CONCLUDED BY SAYING HE FIRMLY BELIEVED THAT THIS WAS THE ONLY POLICY THAT WOULD WORK.

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13) TOUCHING ON THE INTERNAL SCENE, PERES INDICATED HE FELT THAT PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR'S GOVERNMENT WAS COMING APART BECAUSE OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION. WITH "ONE PERCENT INFLATION A DAY, NOT EVEN THE SHOPKEEPERS CAN KEEP THEIR BOOKS." PERES SAID ALL SIGNS SUGGEST THAT THERE WOULD SOON BE A CHANGE IN THE POLITICAL SCENE IN ISRAEL. HE NOTED THAT LABOR HAD WON SEVEN OUT OF THE EIGHT MAJOR CITY HALLS IN ISRAEL'S OCTOBER MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS AND IN RECENT MONTHS UNIVERSITY STUDENT ELECTIONS HAD SIGNIFICANTLY SHOWN A SHIFT AWAY FROM THE LIKUD TOWARDS THE LABOR PARTY. PERES RECALLED THAT TEN YEARS AGO A SHIFT HAD OCCURRED TOWARD THE LIKUD WHICH WAS THE FIRST INDICATOR (IN RETROSPECT) OF THE LIKUD VICTORY IN THE 1977 KNESSET ELECTIONS. HE SAID RECENT POLLS HAVE BEEN VERY FAVORABLE TO LABOR WITH 57 SEATS TO THE LIKUD'S 41 (OUT OF 120 KNESSET SEATS) IF ELECTIONS WERE HELD NOW.

***** MESSAGE SECTION 6 NOT IN DAQ *****
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